

sehr gute Wahl. Sie hat die ganze Fülle des heute zur Verfügung stehenden Materials in das Buch einfließen lassen und somit ein Werk geschaffen, in dem die Mythologien aller mongolischen Völker einbezogen sind. Damit werden zum Einen die Unterschiede aufgezeigt, viel mehr aber wird das große Ausmaß der Gemeinsamkeiten deutlich. Dass alle mongolischen Völker vor der massiven Beeinflussung durch den Buddhismus, wie Birtalan in ihrer Einleitung schreibt, sehr weitgehend übereinstimmende "animistisch-schamanistische Vorstellungen" hatten, wird in den Wortartikeln durch viele Verweise auf akribisch gesammelte linguistische, ethnografische und volkliterarische Quellen aus den unterschiedlichsten Regionen und Sprachen vielfach belegt. Diese "urtümliche Schicht" der mongolischen Mythologie klar herausgearbeitet zu haben, ist bestimmt ein Hauptverdienst der Autorin.

So wie die anderen Teile des Wörterbuches besteht auch der über die Mythologie der mongolischen Volksreligion aus drei Abschnitten. Dem eigentlichen Stichwortteil ist eine Einleitung voran- und ein reichhaltiger Bildteil nachgestellt. Beides verdient großes Lob. Die in diesem Falle glücklicherweise wenigstens um ein paar Seiten, als sonst in dieser Wörterbuchreihe üblich, längere Einleitung bietet nach einer zwar dennoch auf das Allerwesentlichste beschränkt bleiben müßenden, aber trotzdem gut lesbaren Kurzdarstellung der Geschichte der mongolischen Völker sowie der Hauptmerkmale ihrer Mythologien eine ganz hervorragende Quellen- und Literaturbibliografie, die bestimmt noch vielen Studierenden, Lehrenden und Forschenden von großem Nutzen sein wird. Ihr folgt eine Zeittafel, eine Übersichtstabelle der mongolischen Sprachen sowie ein sehr informativer von Zsolt Horváth und István Sántha, zwei Mitarbeitern des Kartografischen Instituts der Budapester Eötvös Loránd Universität, gestalteter Karten- teil, wofür ihnen besonderer Dank gebührt, wiewohl sich ein kleiner Fehler eingeschlichen hat: Auf der Asienkarte auf den Seiten 928–929, auf der die Siedlungsgebiete aller mongolischen Völker durch ihnen in der Legende in einem Index zugeordnete Zahlen markiert sind, sucht man vergeblich nach der 313, welche den Barga-Burjaten zugeordnet ist. Da das Gebiet aber durch das Wort "barga" gekennzeichnet ist, werden wohl die meisten Betrachter der Karte den richtigen Schluss ziehen, dass dort diese Gruppe der Burjaten siedelt, womit dieser Fehler verzeihbar erscheint. Der Bildteil am Ende umfasst insgesamt 62 Abbildungen. Schon allein dieser Umfang, aber noch mehr die sorgfältige und überlegte Auswahl der Zeichnungen, Stiche und Fotografien aus verschiedenen Quellen zu verschiedenen Regionen und Zeiten ermöglicht dem Leser, einen nachhaltigen Eindruck von den materiellen Zeugnissen der mongolischen volksreligiösen Kultur zu bekommen.

Die mehr als 450 Wortartikel im Stichwortteil, also dem Hauptteil von Birtalans Werk, sind gut aufgebaut, klar gegliedert und ihre Länge den inhaltlichen Notwendigkeiten immer entsprechend. Sie sind in sich abgeschlossen, also für sich alleine gut lesbar, wie es von einem Wörterbuch von Rang auch erwartet wird. Diese

Erwartungen kann das Buch voll und ganz erfüllen. Kritik muss aber hinsichtlich stellenweise doch sehr unsorgfältiger sprachlicher Lektorierung geäußert werden. Dass der Verlag aus Kostengründen auf eine solche vielleicht überhaupt verzichtet hat, soll hier nicht unterstellt werden, wiewohl Sätze wie z. B. "falls man es dennoch tut, muß der Körper zerteilt und den vier Himmelsrichtungen zu begraben werden" (1056) oder "Dieser Oboy-a wurde in einer einiger Entfernung von den Wohnorten gebaut" (1017) anders nur schwer erklärbar sind. Ärgerlich ist auch, dass das Abkürzungsverzeichnis, das der Bibliografie vorangestellt ist, nicht vollständig ist. So sucht man vergeblich nach der Erklärung der Abkürzung "OLZ", was nur fortgeschrittenen, fachkundigen Lesern ermöglicht, die in der Bibliografie vermerkte Rezension von Ágnes Birtalan von Walther Heissigs "Schamanen und Geisterbeschwörer der östlichen Mongolei" in der *Orientalistische[n] Literaturzeitung* aufzufinden. Auch für diese Unvollständigkeit zeichnet letztlich der Verlag verantwortlich. Zu dessen Ehrenrettung kann aber mitgeteilt werden, dass bei der Durchsicht des Textes insgesamt nur wenige Fehler gefunden wurden, deren schlimmste die hier angeführten sind.

Die Wortartikel zeichnen sich auch durch sehr viele, sehr sorgfältig eingefügte Querverweise aus. Diese erlauben es, dieses Wörterbuch nicht nur als Nachschlagewerk zu benützen, sondern auch regelrecht darin zu schmökern, was nicht nur vergnüglich, sondern auch sehr lehrreich ist, da man solcherart aus verschiedenen Perspektiven auf die Begriffe stößt bzw. sich immer neue Gesichtspunkte erschließen und sich immer weitere Zusammenhänge erhellen. Hervorzuheben ist weiters, dass die Autorin, die ja selbst umfangreiches Feldforschungsmaterial erhoben hat und überdies als sehr aktives Mitglied der internationalen mongolistischen Forschungsgemeinschaft immer am neuesten Stand der Forschung ist, in ihr Wörterbuch sehr viele aktuelle Daten eingeflochten hat. So erfahren wir z. B. über den Baumkult der Mongolen nicht nur, dass in der "Geheimen Geschichte" zu lesen ist, dass zu den Zeiten Dschingis Khans der "Vielastige Baum" Gegenstand vielfältiger Verehrung und von großer magischer Bedeutung war, sondern auch wo und wie die Mongolen von heute welche Bäume verehren und dass sie diese v. a. um Fruchtbarkeit und Kindersegen bitten (947 f.). Die vielen aktuellen Informationen dieser Art, die das Wörterbuch enthält, erweitern seine Verwendbarkeit als Nachschlagewerk und steigern gleichzeitig das Lesevergnügen. Es sei allen an der Kultur der Mongolen Interessierten empfohlen. Für viele wird es unentbehrlich werden.

Stefan Krist

**Classen, Constance** (ed.): *The Book of Touch*. Oxford: Berg, 2005. 461 pp. ISBN 978-1-84520-059-6. Price: £ 19.99

"The Book of Touch" is the 3rd installment of Berg Publishers "Sensory Formations Series." This collection documents the work of Concordia University's Sensoria

Research Team, and states as its aim to understand “the role of the senses in history, culture, and aesthetics, by redressing . . . the hegemony of vision and privileging of discourse in contemporary theory and cultural studies” (462). The volume surveyed here challenges conventional ways of seeing, knowing, and experiencing the world by examining various functions and qualities of touch as the most elusive of our senses. Its editor Constance Classen applies a comparative approach to sensory experiences and expressions with the aim to ultimately rehabilitate tactile perception.

In her introduction Classen refers to touch as the “hungriest sense of postmodernity” (2), suggesting that little is left to feel in a society dominated by images. With the recent proliferation of cultural turns one might now sceptically anticipate yet another turn – a “tactile” turn, let’s say. The editor on her part is careful not to overstep the scope of tactile culture within anthropology’s recently rediscovered sensory project. Instead, she situates the sense of touch amongst other cultural practices, grounding it in personal experience as well as social life. In her formulation, touch is not only a private act, but a fundamental medium for the expression, experience, and contestation of social values and hierarchies (1). In what may be considered a pioneering approach, Classen acknowledges the influence of French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida, Irigaray, and Nancy who reflected on the subject of tactility in the late twentieth century. Drawing on this background, she amplifies its scope by dealing with the sense of touch in non-Western cultures while avoiding the habit of emphasising touch as mere physicality.

Assimilating the texts of philosophers, novelists, and anthropologists, “The Book of Touch” is divided into nine sections, each containing a multitude of essays and dictums on the given theme. The collection approaches questions such as “How is touch developed differently across cultures?”, “What are the boundaries of pain and pleasure?”, or “Is there a politics of touch?” and refers to topics ranging from a nineteenth-century account of phantom limb pain to recent reflections on the handling of photographs.

Part I is entitled “Contact” and grounds on the premise that we learn a “mother touch” along with a mother tongue. Engaging and conversing with other people is not limited to language, but also involves “Tactile Communication,” as Ruth Finnegan’s first chapter explores with regard to the social conventions of touch. In a comparable manner David Howes’s article “Skinscapes. Embodiment, Culture, and Environment” employs the category of “skin knowledge” as a way of investigating the imprint of social values and environmental perceptions upon the body’s surface. Drawing on ethnographic examples from various indigenous as well as Western cultural contexts, Howes demonstrates how one’s material environment – i.e., landscape – is linked to the “skinscape.” He suggests that by living in urbanised, technologised Western societies “we are perhaps not so likely to think of our bodies as pastoral landscapes irrigated by rivers but we may well think of

them as cityscapes, connected by road systems, communications systems, and waterworks, and charged by electricity, which at times runs low” (36). Howes ends his text with some rather disturbing thoughts regarding the possible future role of “skinscapes” matching the virtual landscapes of cyberspace.

In the introduction to the second part of the book, entitled “Pleasure,” Classen comments on the sparsity of this subject within scholarly discourse. Unsurprisingly, the chapters do not deal with pleasure as a corporeal sensation as much as they consider the sociohistorical development of values in relation to physical pleasures. While John E. Crowley demonstrates that the concept of bodily comfort is a development of the eighteenth century – prior to which clothing, furniture, and housing had been understood as indicators of social status rather than as commodities enhancing physical comfort –, geographer Yi-Fu Tuan warns that the ongoing restriction of touch will break our sense of connectedness with the material world and, eventually, our possibilities for aesthetic enjoyment. A comparison of Jean-Paul Sartre’s and Simone de Beauvoir’s philosophical concepts of touch in the last essay of this section reveals some significant and hitherto underappreciated differences in the two philosopher’s notions of eros and the appropriation of the other.

Part III is entitled “Pain” and makes extensive (critical) use of Michel Foucault’s writings on discipline, punishment, and the power relations implicated in torture and physical suffering. Conceived as *the* “counterpleasure” in postmodernity (K. MacKendrick, Counterpleasures. Albany 1999), the sensation of pain is assigned an intensity of experience, increasingly equated to authenticity. The vocabulary and metaphors of pain employed in the assembled texts are remarkably rich. Most especially, Judy Pugh’s “The Language of Pain in India” provides meticulous descriptions of physical and psychological suffering that reflect the underlying “integrated mind-body system” in Indian culture (118). “The Tortures of the Inquisition and the Invention of Modern Guilt” by Ariel Glucklich and “Sex, Pain, and the Marquis de Sade” by David B. Morris are meanwhile prescient in linking pain to the concept of guilt, suggesting that the intentional infliction of suffering and pain constitutes the “internalisation” of a system of social control.

Part IV, “Male Bonding,” and Part V, “Women’s Touch,” are dedicated to the construction of masculine and feminine identities. Classen starts off with the observation that “one of the key features of masculine touch . . . seems to be how it is used among men to express ideals of manliness, establish social hierarchies, and ensure group solidarity” (155). One of the outstanding texts, “The Dying Kiss. Intimacy and Gender in the Trenches of the First World War,” illustrates how norms of tactile contact between men and concepts of masculinity changed profoundly during the First World War, a war that so extraordinarily brutalised the male body yet paradoxically allowed for “fear, vulnerability, support, and physical tenderness” (195). The two texts

on “Imperial Touch. Schooling Male Bodies in Colonial India” deal with concepts of cleanliness and physical habits, shedding light on the imperial practices of disciplining the “colonised body.” They are particularly rewarding when read in comparison to the “Doon School Chronicles,” a series of ethnographic films made by David MacDougall between 1997–2000 that explore the importance of tactility to education and discipline in an elite Indian all-boy school.

“Women’s Touch” deals with the controversial concept of women *as* touch and focuses mainly on female handiwork. Be rural China, eighteenth and nineteenth-century England or early twentieth-century Paris, skillful manipulation of material and “craftswomanship” has been crucial not only in securing a means of subsistence, but also in developing an alternative feminine aesthetic. It signifies an important antipode to the growing dematerialisation and the loss of physical reality of our world (Richard Sennett’s forthcoming book on craftsmanship elaborates on this theme; New Haven 2007). Other texts in the section include stirring descriptions of women’s foot binding in China and childbirth in an Inuit community.

“Control,” the sixth part of the volume, covers subjects as diverse as Norbert Elias’s view of medieval manners, the mechanisms of touch in a Victorian prison, and the rules of touch in modern museums. The assembled texts reveal contemporary Western discourse concerning the control of touch as “an essential means of establishing and maintaining an orderly world” (259), arising “from anxieties about the vulnerability of the social body – and, ultimately, of individual bodies – to invasion and violation” (262). Elias’s text on dining habits in the Middle Ages is particularly revealing in demonstrating how the increased regulation of the sense of touch and the heightened awareness of body boundaries has come to be considered a vital part of the civilising process. Classen labels the modern etiquette of keeping one’s hand to oneself as “hands-off policy” (260). She describes how in the early museums of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the exhibits on display were explicitly expected to be touched; over time, with the increased importance of sight, the sense of touch lost its intellectual and aesthetic value. Philip Priestley’s significant study on Victorian prison life complements Foucault’s analysis of visual surveillance in the modern prison (*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York 1979) by taking into consideration the important aspect of prisoners’ tactile disciplining and the institutionalised reeducation of their sense of touch. What makes the section on “Control” so interesting is the combined analysis of the disruptive power of unregulated tactility and its connection to the current crisis of security in Western society.

Part VII is entitled “Uncommon Touch” and comprises a collection of texts on rather obscure tactile experiences, as for instance the chapter on “Visceral Perception” demonstrates. Drawing the attention to an inner world not customarily associated with sensory

perception, the article’s author Drew Leder investigates the “perceptual reticence of our viscera as compared to the body surface” (338 f.). Noting that our interoceptive vocabulary is mostly developed in relation to pain, Leder elucidates that the “hiddenness” of our visceral organs is essential to their healthy functioning: they require seclusion from the external world just as the sensorimotor body requires exposure. Other chapters in the section dealing with the sensual consequences of amputation, paralysis, phantom limb pain, blindness, loss of the sense of smell, or the so-called “locked-in syndrome” take an interest in the experience and perception of people with an altered or heightened awareness of touch. In direct contrast, the futurist F. T. Marinetti’s 1921 essay on “Tactilism” contains an early plea to view touch as an art form, anticipating a time when people would “contribute indirectly toward the perfection of spiritual communication . . . through the epidermis” (331). For me, however, the outstanding text is Temple Grandin’s “Autism and ‘The Squeeze Machine,’” a vivid and haunting account of her experiences as an autistic child. She recalls how she secured her body boundaries by inventing a “squeeze machine” – a box with panels to squeeze her body – which eventually helped her find some security and relax. The examples presented in “Uncommon Touch” also leave a strong impression on the reader, sensitising his/her own ability for tactile experiences.

Part VIII, “Tactile Therapies,” is about healing practices and alternative medicines applied to touch. Beginning with Jesus as “the best-known example of a tactile healer in the West” (347), Classen draws from various examples of therapeutic touch ranging from more familiar practices such as physiotherapy to non-Western medical procedures such as acupuncture, sweat baths, Ayurvedic massage, *qigong*, yogic exercise, and therapeutic dance. S. V. Govindan’s article, for example, traces the roots of massage in both Asian and Western cultures back to 2500 BC and illustrates the benefits of tactile Ayurvedic medicine for strengthening both body and mind. The idea of healing through touch, however, exceeds the mere medical field in so far, as it is also frequently associated with magic or supernatural influences, as the case of “royal touch” illustrates. In his essay, “Magical Healing. The King’s Touch,” Keith Thomas examines the widespread medieval believe that the touch of the sovereigns of England or France could cure scrofula, also called “King’s Evil.” The custom survived well into the eighteenth century, when it increasingly came to be regarded as superstitious and died out. Touch is nevertheless still closely related to religious as well as secular power and plays an important role in the affirmation of social orders and roles. Roy Porter’s text on the physician’s touch in eighteenth-century England, for instance, shows that tactility in a medical context is not just simply related to the notion of cure but can also be perceived as “a performance in which the physician enacts his identity through a set of established procedures and confirms his right ‘above all, to touch and penetrate the

body” (349). The articles in this section help to clarify that medical or healing touch does not only concern treatment, but also examination and diagnosis and is, thus, far from being limited to so-called “alternative therapies.”

The ninth and final part – “Touch and Technology” – deals with the acceleration of machines and bodies. All the assembled texts analyse ways in which modernity has changed, or continues to change, human perception. Taking into consideration the physical interaction between bodies and machines, the commodification of touch and telepresence as an out-of-the-body experience, this section provides a compact outline of the role tactility plays in digital technology. On this note, Dorinne Kondo’s “Polishing Your Heart. Artisans and Machines in Japan” argues that industrialisation is not necessarily opposed to craftsmanship. People in Japan who perceive themselves as working *with* machines do not necessarily feel as alienated as is often assumed in the West; Kondo locates the reason for the effortless handling of modern technologies in the traditional Shinto spirits considered to inhabit inanimate objects and, therefore, mechanical devices too. Susan Kozel’s description of “Experiences of a Virtual Body” derive from her participation in an art installation called “Telematic Dreaming” in which she visually detached herself from her body by projecting her image into another room. The audience’s reactions to the artist’s projected self were transmitted back to the artist from where she could then move her body in response. Taking part in the experiment for a month, Kozel realised that one’s internalised behaviour does not easily change along with an alteration of one’s appearance. She describes how her personal experience did not correspond to the cyber-feminist paradigm of cyberspace as a liberating disembodied space in which age, sex, and race do not matter. She nevertheless proposes that virtual reality might potentially offer “a space for us to recognize the tendency for our prejudices and conditioning to be carried forward, and to work at a new way to interrelate” (445). The volume concludes with an epigrammatic note on data streams and virtual touch.

In brief introductory chapters that precede each section, Classen contextualises and summarises the selected passages. Nonetheless, the metaphors she uses to describe the organisation of the sections and the images she uses are often rather clumsy. The compilation also regrettably makes very little use of the writings of Merleau-Ponty and/or Luce Irigaray, although Classen acknowledges their influence on issues concerning tactile culture and kinaesthetic perception in her preface to the volume. Irigaray’s remarkable statement in “An Ethics of Sexual Difference” that “God is always entrusted to the look and never sufficiently imagined as tactile bliss” (Ithaca 1993: 162) could have enhanced further reflections on the contradiction inherent in the concept of a solitary spectator-god, as well as on gendered renderings of touch in general. Notwithstanding, the volume presents a very well-informed and inspiring collection of academic as well as literary sources

carefully extracted from a seemingly endless reservoir of writings on the subject of touch across cultures and times.

“The Book of Touch” is definitely a book that invites its readers to rummage through – an eminently tactile practice that corresponds to the sensory value of books as described by Classen in her introductory remarks (7). It is a precious collection for anyone interested in the formation of the senses yet might be dissatisfying for readers who expect a systematic overview of the topic. At times, “The Book of Touch” appears like a random compilation of aphorisms whereas at other times it gives the impression of a profound hotchpotch that makes the evasive and often inarticulate sense of touch tangible. The editor herself describes “The Book of Touch” as “a compilation of the expected and the unexpected” (4) – meaning, I suppose, that the book occasionally refers to the obvious whilst also holding a number of truly imaginative and surprising sections. In short, this is a superb and infuriatingly diverse anthology.

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**Cooper, Thomas L.:** Sacred Painting in Bali. Tradition in Transition. Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2005. 184 pp., illus. ISBN 974-524-034-6. Price: \$ 45.00

Thomas Coopers neues Buch über die balinesische Malerei besticht durch außergewöhnliche Abbildungen und stellt zudem eine höchst bedenkenswerte These zur Dialektik von Tradition und Wandel in Bali auf. Dass die theoretische Durchführung seiner Betrachtungen zu sakraler Malerei letztlich zu kurz greift, beeinträchtigt den, aus der Phänomenanalyse erwachsenden, positiven Gesamteindruck nur unwesentlich.

Bereits in seiner ersten, zusammen mit J. Fischer verfassten Studie über die balinesische Volkskunst (The Folk Art of Bali. Kuala Lumpur 1998) hat Thomas Cooper seine Vertrautheit mit der balinesischen Malerei und ihrer spezifischen Kompositionsweise im Kontext anderer Künste bewiesen. Auch sein neues Werk, “Sacred Painting in Bali”, befasst sich mit Malerei, es thematisiert allerdings nicht mehr die narrativen Bildsequenzen volkstümlicher Malkunst, sondern wendet sich gezielt solchen Bildern zu, die als jeweils solitäre Kompositionen auf Tempelwänden oder auf Schreinen für Götterbilder zum Einsatz kommen, und die Cooper daher als Sakralkunst betrachtet.

Das Ergebnis ist ein Buch, dessen Anschaffung allein schon wegen seiner Fülle an hochwertigen Abbildungen lohnt. Es handelt sich dabei um Bilder, die verschiedene balinesische Künstler an ganz unterschiedlichen Orten der Insel für lokale Auftraggeber zur Verzierung von Dorf- oder Familientempeln erstellt haben. Entlang zahlreicher Beispiele, die den Leser auf eine Entdeckungsreise durch die balinesische Kunstlandschaft mitnehmen, beschreibt Cooper nicht nur die Ikonographie der Bilder selbst, sondern auch die Arbeitsbedingungen der jeweiligen Maler, deren Lebensumstände sowie die Stilistik ihres Schaffens, um diese soziokulturellen und ästhetischen Beobachtungen schließlich auf seine Grundfrage